

Enhancing Scientific Collaboration Through Quality Assurance

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The Office of Research and Development's (ORD) interest in sound science is demonstrated by its commitment to a strong program of quality assurance (QA) that applies to both U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) researchers and their collaborators from other federal agencies, universities, and private-sector profit and nonprofit organizations. This is undoubtedly a direct result of the magnitude of the U.S. EPA's mission and the accompanying need for sound, credible science for formulating effective public policies for protection of human health and the environment. The QA program enhances the scientific outcome of collaboration by creating a framework for describing and documenting research goals, methods, and results. The QA program provides a mechanism for independent assessments of research execution, including assessment of research data, with the need for assessments based on the projected use of the research. The basic features of the QA program have been in existence since the early 1980s, but this poster will highlight some topics that have emerged more recently — in particular, the Agency's laboratory competency policy, the information quality guidelines, and scientific ethics.

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